

The Times-Dispatch

Business Office: Times-Dispatch Building
16 South Tenth Street.
Richmond, Va.
Postmaster: Please send address changes to
The Times-Dispatch, Richmond, Va.

BY MAIL. One Six Three One
POSTAGE PAID. Year, \$3.00; Six Months, \$1.50; Three Months, \$1.00; Single Copies, 10 Cents.
Daily without Sunday, \$1.00; Sunday, 10 Cents.
Sunday edition only, 10 Cents.

The Times-Dispatch Carrier Delivery Service is available in Richmond and Petersburg. Delivery is made daily except on Sundays and holidays. Delivery is made at the door of the subscriber's residence.

Published January 25, 1913, at Richmond, Va., as second-class matter under act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1913.

THE PROGRESS OF PHILATELY.

It should be found that in long unoccupied trunks and dusty attics in Virginia there lie undisturbed thousands of dollars' worth of old postage stamps, the fact would not in the least surprise us. So few of us realize that many of the canceled stamps of former days have real financial value that, no doubt, fortunes in them have been thrown away in ignorance. Especially in the South is such a supposition reasonable, for certain ante-bellum village and city issues, as well as local Confederate stamps, are numbered among the rarest and most valuable American stamps. These particular stamps were the crude designs of artistic postmasters that look insignificant by the side of our issues of today but the fact that the supply of the former was so limited creates their value. Rarely rather than age determines the value of stamps, as it does of coins.

Some of these very Southern stamps are being admired this week by the people of New York City, who are attending the first International Philatelic Exhibition ever given in the United States. It unfolds a colorful panorama of the pictorial history of the postal development of almost the whole civilized world. The value of the exhibits is estimated at more than \$2,000,000. Three hundred collectors are the exhibitors, but they are only a small part of the 500,000 collectors in the world, of whom more than 125,000 are accredited to this country. Stamp collecting, or philately, is neither a science nor an art. It is an industry, but rather a hobby, although its devotees can demonstrate to a certain extent that it has an educational value. There can be no question that the pursuit has a suggestive historical value, enabling the collector by his stamps alone to trace changes in government and stages in the development of nations.

Stamp collecting is now seventy years old. The original philatelists were regarded as weak-minded, but now they have won their place in the great company of collectors of objects of art. It is the common pastime of schoolboys and millionaires, and crowned heads are enrolled in philatelic ranks. Eight hundred philatelic journals are now issued, and philatelic societies exist in many countries.

The rarest stamps on exhibition in New York are the one and two penny "post-office" stamps of Mauritius, valued at \$18,000. Another exceedingly rare and valuable stamp shown there is the provisional stamp, issued in 1845 by the postmaster of Alexandria, Va. The Federal government at that period was unwilling to undertake the expense of issuing postage stamps generally, and permitted the postmasters of certain towns and cities to issue stamps at their own expense and at their own convenience. The plan was so successful that in 1847 the government changed its mind and took over the work of issuing stamps generally.

THE HALLOWEEN FANTASTICS.

The streets of Richmond were full of the Middle Ages last night. It is a good thing that Halloween comes to the modern world of airships and automobiles with its hint of the days when fairies and witches were a part of the common faith. It is like a breath of the world's childhood. The crowds of fantastically garbed children have a moment's share in the long heritage of imagination and poetry that somehow seems lost from our twentieth century revels.

There is no particular hint to Halloween. It celebrates nothing that moderns feel concerned with. Its religious significance is largely forgotten. Yet that is one reason why we should keep it alive. The human family needs a few festal times that are nothing but fun. Most of our holidays have a somber and chastening background. They memorialize the escape from some evil or the initiation of some new effort. There is too little dancing for dancing's sake, and laughter for the sake of joy.

We are glad that Richmond's children through the streets and play grounds on the grown-ups. To believe in a witch is a wonderful and satisfying thing. To seek out the meaning of love's riddle with a candle's flame or a flung apple-pie is better than to seek love's meaning in a social register or Bradstreet's rating list. It is better for youth to get its thrills out of fairies and hobgoblins than from what Irvin Cobb calls the "Glorious Eu and Hy." When the front-page is missing from its hinges this morning and the children peep from their holes, remember that life is a play as well as a trial balance.

These are great nights on the Appomattox for the disciples of Isaac Walton and Grover Cleveland, although we are informed that the eels are biting in far greater numbers than the toothsome flatbaker. Usually, however, enough of the latter are secured for breakfast, and the Appomattox Times-Virginian, being duly sworn, deposes that, "in comparison, the eels are not in the same class."

A POSSIBLE SOLUTION OF THE FEE PROBLEM.

A rational remedy for preventing the overpayment of public officers in Virginia compensated by fees is suggested by C. P. Shaw, of Norfolk, in a communication appearing in The Times-Dispatch this morning.

No novelty attaches to the main principle so set forth. In these columns more than once has a maximum fee limit been offered as a reasonable method of curtailing the excessive compensation of fee officers. It is clearly outlined in the report of the Virginia Tax Commission issued in 1912. Briefly, the proposal is to establish a maximum limit for the amount of fees which shall be retained by fee officers. All fees under that limit are to constitute the compensation of the officer; all fees over that limit are to be turned into the public treasury. This obviates the necessity for the payment of a fixed salary by the State, and saves the embarrassment of the poorly paid fee officer who does not wish the small amount of his earnings to be a fact of general knowledge.

It is the application of this principle which Mr. Shaw recommends that is of principal interest, for he directs attention to the system employed in New Jersey, where compensation rises in the scale in proportion to population. It is quite obvious that the salaries for the same office must vary in the different localities either on a basis of population or business transacted. The public officer who bears threefold the responsibility and does three times the work of some other officer holding a like title should justly have higher compensation, especially if deputies are to be paid out of the amount of fees received.

The result of such a system, if put into operation in Virginia, would be to deprive no officer of any amount to which he is equitably entitled. It would protect the poorly paid fee officer and dook the overpaid fee officer taking all the amount he received over and above a reasonable wage and turning it into the public treasury.

Certain other abuses flowing out of the fee system would be destroyed by the State-wide application of the principle of commission government to city and county administration, but as Mr. Shaw perceives, the accomplishment of these changes lies in the future, and for present purposes Virginia must adopt some practical and simple system that will strike down the greater evils of the fee system as now constituted. The fundamental principle to be followed in fee reform is that public officers should have a just and fair compensation for their services and no more. Overpayment is the condition that must first be destroyed.

THE CITY AS LANDLORD.

The modern conception of a city is that it is largely a great dealer in improved real estate. It is true that most American cities own little land except that used for public buildings, parks and the like. Yet, it is increasingly clear that the chief interest of the city is in land. The annexation problems thrashed out by Richmond these past months have all had to do with land values and land improvement. Outside of this interest, the city has only one big function, to look after public safety and public morals. The mass of people who live in one community take common measures against fire, disease, crime and vice. They establish rules to enable them to associate comfortably.

This social function we are fulfilling with some enlightenment and a fair measure of success. The duty of caring for land we have not yet realized. For example, it has been discovered that in Pittsburgh, the city owns nearly 1,000 pieces of property, from which practically no revenue is derived. Some of this land is in unimproved streets and alleys, but some is improved and occupied by "tenants" who pay no rent. One strip of land, once the back channel of the Allegheny River, is said to be worth \$250,000. For years this has been used by railroads and manufacturing factories without charge. The Pittsburgh Council is investigating the whole matter of the use of public lands.

It seems evident that in the future American cities will imitate the example of German towns in buying and selling land. In one Texas municipality they have already begun taxing the land at a higher rate than the improvements. In the last analysis, this means that the city as a landlord has come to charge a higher rent on the theory that it has improved the land and made it valuable, and should therefore share in the increased profits. It has recently been suggested that it would be possible for Richmond to buy all the land needed for bridge approaches to Mayo Bridge and complete this necessary public work as it develops and later dispose of what remains. We are coming to the idea that a city is a landlord.

In view of the opening of the season for partridges and other game next Saturday, the Tidewater Democrat warns its readers that "we will probably not be in our office on that day, nor can we be reached by telephone." Even at that, the whirling birds need not feel the least fear.

At the formal opening of the Medical College of Virginia Thursday night another superiority at Richmond was manifested. The finest, the sweetest and the handsomest corps of trained nurses and near-trained nurses in the world were there in ten solid rows of immaculate snowy white and blue glory.

There is no dispute as to who is Hubert's choice for United States Senator from Alabama.

Chicago policemen have decided that the tango is beautiful, and that "the trouble is not with the dance but with the dancers." But it is so hard to separate them.

POOLROOMS OR NOTHING?

Men and women need recreation. This platitude is one of the basic faiths held by The Times-Dispatch. Therefore, we cannot agree with all a correspondent, whose letter is printed elsewhere, says on the evils of poolrooms. Our friend goes too far. He declares that cold weather brings young men into poolrooms by the strange fascination of the game. "They abandon all ideas of working for themselves or their poor wives." He pictures a class of idlers who stroll about dressed as the lilies of the valley, with two alms in life, to get money without honest effort, and to get food and clothes the same way. Their wives and children suffer. Or their parents must support them.

We do agree as to the intolerable nuisance of the Broad Street leafer. He should be abolished. Yet the real problem is to give him something to do. There is no use making him move on, unless he moves in the right direction, and not to a saloon, or worse. The poolroom offers an innocent enough place for social recreation in the majority of cases. Of course, it has evils. We hear accounts of gambling in such resorts; and there may be a tendency to spend more money than in right, and to waste time that might be better employed.

Yet young men need some sort of social relaxation. The worker has no pleasant club in which he may play pool. The Y. M. C. A. seems unfortunately, unable to get hold of these fellows. They go to poolrooms as naturally as water flows downhill. They want talk, lights, amusement, forgetfulness. It would be a sorry lot of people who spent all their time working or sleeping. The poolroom meets a need. That is why it gets patronage.

What we might do is to give young men better loafing places than poolrooms, say public clubs, of a free and easy sort, where the man who has little money might spend an evening with his friends, chatting, enjoying some kind of music, playing games, doing any human stunt that might make life happier and more picturesque. We imagine the day municipal enterprise or private philanthropy opens such pleasant resorts, the Broad Street crowd will be largely broken of its bad habits.

INSURE THE TITLE PURCHASER.

Some time ago a lawyer in a Virginia community made a mistake in the preparation of an abstract of title, which caused financial loss to his client, but he is not held legally responsible for his error. The Petersburg Index-Appel declares that the lawyers of that city "recognize their responsibility and meet it" in such cases, referring to a well-known and able barrister of the Cochrane City, who, in drawing up an abstract of title, overlooked a claim against the property in question. His client sustained a loss of almost \$1,000, which the attorney promptly made good. "In the plain case of a lawyer assuring his client that the title to certain property is unclouded, when there rests upon it a cloud, resulting in financial loss to the man who purchases, relying upon the opinion of his lawyer, it is easy to see his financial responsibility," avers the Index-Appel.

The point that we desire to make here is that somebody must lose in such a transaction. If the lawyer considers himself morally bound, he loses; if not, his client loses.

The second point we wish to make is, that if our system were changed neither would lose.

The third point we wish to make is that Virginia should establish the Torrens system of land title registration and guarantee. Under that method the State guarantees the title, and if defect appears to the damage of the purchaser, he goes against the State and recovers. The system is business-like, it is certain and it is safe. It creates mobility in land transfer and in negotiations depending upon land as security that nothing else can create.

The adoption of this system would impose no appreciable burden on the legal profession, but it would confer vast benefits on the landowner. Such State title insurance has worked most successfully in several States, notably in Massachusetts.

There is every reason why Virginia should adopt this system, and none why she should not.

Of Colonel Roosevelt, the Sandy Valley News says: "He is letting to shatter the sceptre of the tyrant and break the shackles of the political slave; he wants to tear the diadem from the brow and place the fasces of authority in the hands of the people; he wants to lead the human race from the 'plough' of despond to the happy land where justice reigns supreme and every man may find life worth living." Well, he's got a job on his hands.

Thirty French officers have offered to fight Bulgarian Torkos, who was commissioned by King Ferdinand to come and challenge Pierre Loti for what he said about the Bulgar army. Better make a world's series out of it.

Whose face is best known by the largest number of Americans? The man in the moon? Maybe, but what real person? T. Roosevelt, the grinning chief in Cream of Wheat pictures, President Wilson and Lillian Russell are suggested as facially famous. Whose face is best known of Richmonders? Governor Mann, some say. Abe, the newswoman's, might be a good guess. By and large, we are tempted to agree with the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, which asked the question, that the best known face in America is that of John Bunny, movie actor. People of all classes and all ages are familiar with that genial countenance; they grin when he flashes on the screen; they sigh when he fades out; queer old world, isn't it, when the most familiar face belongs to a man you have never seen?

ON THE SPUR OF THE MOMENT

By ROY K. MOULTON.

Primping.
It seemed as though most all the lumps in me arose when my wife primped. I sat around and fumed and fretted. "Ouch, ain't you done yet?" she sticks a hairpin in her head. Then tries another one instead. She tucks her hair up, takes it down, and wiggles into her new gown. And wiggles when she begins to act. She walks and gets her form exact. Until the time has come before the glass to raise the curtain at the show—And she's not ready, she's not ready. She pokes at this and pokes at that. Finally gets to her hat. Right there is where the world stands still!

There's not a thing to do until she gets that thing upon her straight, and a just wait and wait and wait. I like the suffragettes all right, but I don't like the way they're ready quite to vote the same as the rest of the world. Because, you see, I think that when the time comes for them to go, they'll be primping, don't you know. Election day would be gone ere they'd fixed up half of their back hair.

Revived Football.
The edict has gone forth that football this year must be mild, and no rough work is to be allowed. As we understand the revised rules, the following restrictions are made:

When a player finds another player's ear in his mouth during a scrimmage he is not supposed to bite it off, as formerly. It is allowed only to chew it until it has lost all semblance to its former self.

When a player gets the heel of his shoe into the mouth of an opposing player he is not allowed to smack out his teeth at one time. If the same player does so the second time in the same game, he is allowed to smack out seven more.

When the situation is desperate, opposing players are not allowed to use pickpocket on each other's heads. An occasional brick used in this fashion will not be noticed, but all such deadly blows are tabooed.

When seven men pile onto one and break one of his legs, the seven shall rise and allow the injured man to be carried away to the hospital. Under no circumstances shall they be allowed to break the other leg.

Our Theatrical News.
It is rumored that some man is trying to dramatize Masterpiece "Life of the Bee," and our opinion is that whoever does it will be stung.

The dressmakers have just completed a valuable sketch for Lillian Russell, and she will soon take the place at the head of her own variety troupe.

"The Butterfly on the Wheel" is said to be one of the best-trained insect dramas ever written. In fact, the troupe of trained bees recently seen in Vandalia.

And, hello, is growing old. This is proven by the fact that she has a pair of stockings covered with \$250,000 worth of wrinkles, as under the new act. Nobody will look at her face.

The Sad Days.
The melancholy days have come, the saddest of all. The comic opera season's on, Oh, pause and shed a tear.

We'll sit and view the same old stunts. The same old jokes we'll hear; They're not content to do them once, But spring them every year.

The same old gag, the same old dog. The same old wife, the same old strife, Now mine, but same old show.

Times Change.
Love in a cottage, Kisses and politeness, That was the old line of stuff.

Now it's expansion—Love in a mansion, With rare silver plate and such stuff.

Voice of the People

Proposes Solution of Fee System Problem.

To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir, Believing that you appreciate the importance of salaries paid to public officers, and that you are interested in the following plan for abolishing this evil.

Under the present law the compensation of certain officers is based on the amount of business transacted, and the amount of the fee is approximately in proportion thereto. Thus, the salaries of sheriffs, judges, etc., are graded according to population of counties, as follows:

Population under 25,000, \$2,000 per annum; between 25,000 and 50,000, \$2,500; between 50,000 and 100,000, \$3,000; between 100,000 and 125,000, \$3,500; between 125,000 and 200,000, \$4,000.

Of course, both the graduation of salaries and of population would probably have to be altered to suit conditions in Virginia, but having decided upon a proper scale for both, the principle could be applied to our situation. The salaries of the fee officers should be based on the amount of business transacted, and the amount of the fee should be approximately in proportion thereto. The fee should be a fixed amount, and the amount of the fee should be a fixed amount, and the amount of the fee should be a fixed amount.

This proposed plan is applicable to all public officers, and it is believed that it meets all the objections that have been urged against the present system. The fees would still be retained, but they would be paid as now, by those for whom the services were rendered. No additional taxes would be levied, and no additional burden would be placed upon the people. The plan would be a simple one, and it would be a great improvement upon the present system.

Very truly yours,
S. P. POWELL.

Belmont, Spotsylvania County.

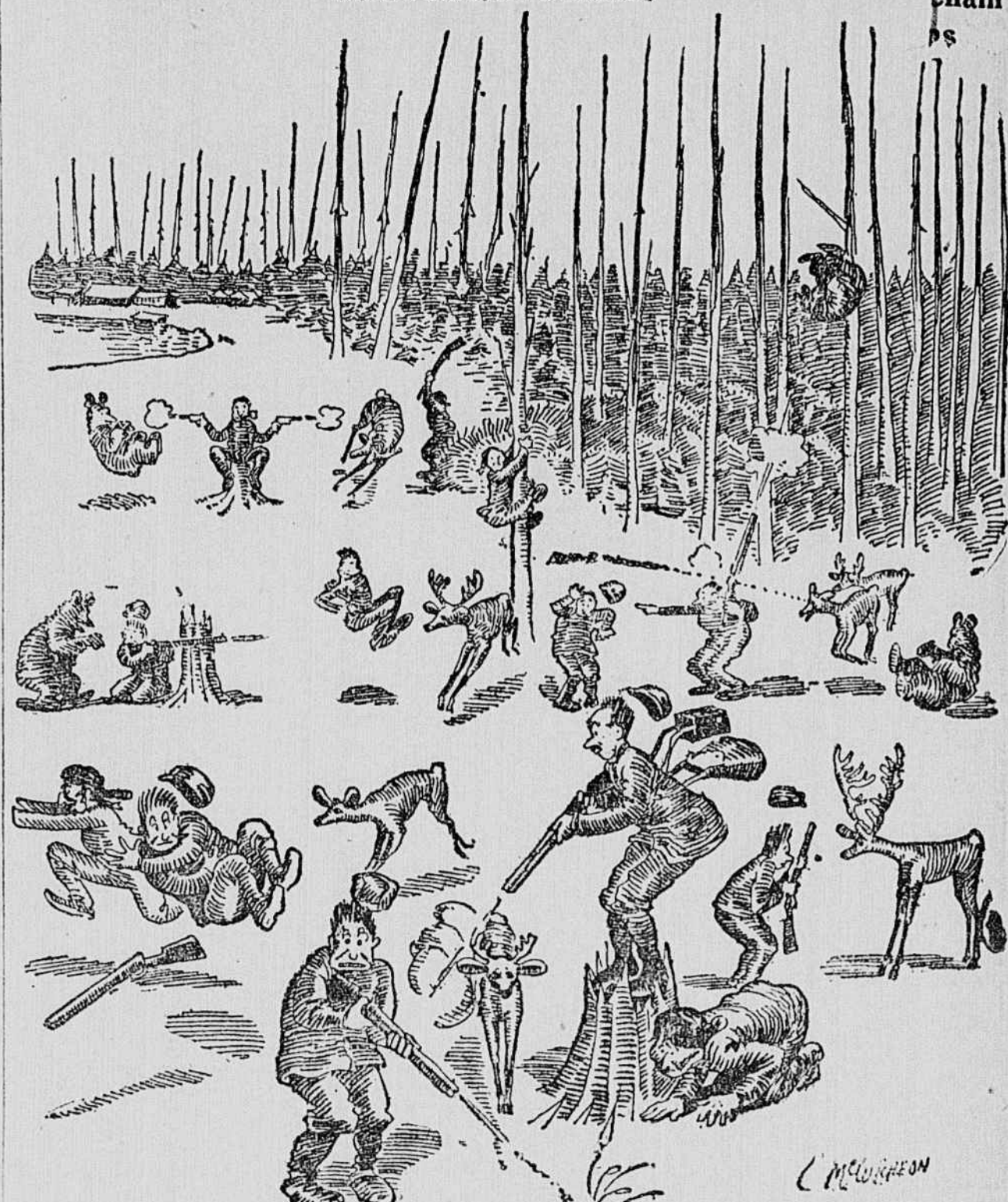
The Chronic Poolroom Loafers.
To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir—As the weather becomes colder the loafers of the poolroom type, especially, are now setting down in one or the other of these resorts for the winter.

How often do we notice, as we pass these places, young men of our acquaintance, lounging about, either on the inside or outside, ranging in age from twenty-one to thirty, who have become so fascinated with this game that they have abandoned all ideas of working, either for themselves or their

AN EXCITING MOMENT IN THE HUNT.

By John T. McCutcheon.

[Copyright, 1913, By John T. McCutcheon.]



severely and jointly, to promote their political interests. To that extent it would tend to take them out of politics. This, however, would only be a temporary relief, as the chronic loafers are now at home under the California home rule commission charters, where the commissions actually govern, by making these chronic loafers be hauled in by the police, and carried before Justice John, it would be the means of breaking up the gang, and many a poor woman and child could have plenty to eat and wear, where they would only know privation and suffering if this means of forcing these idlers to work is not carried out.

Yours respectfully,
J. H. GOLDEN.
Richmond, Va.

The City Hospital.
To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir—The Virginia and Old Dominion Hospitals have offered their buildings to the city of Richmond for use as a city hospital. The old one is much too small, and the new one is crowded together. The Virginia is fully equipped, and the Old Dominion is a fine building. They also offer a place for a "contagious" ward, which will fill a long-felt want in our city.

Mr. Hirschberg has offered a resolution asking for an appropriation of \$10,000 to build a new hospital. The offer of the hospital is accepted, it will not be needed. Mr. Hirschberg has offered a resolution asking for an appropriation of \$10,000 to build a new hospital. The offer of the hospital is accepted, it will not be needed. Mr. Hirschberg has offered a resolution asking for an appropriation of \$10,000 to build a new hospital. The offer of the hospital is accepted, it will not be needed.

There are so many worthy poor in our midst who are poor in children, but poor in this world's goods, and need them as much as they need us. We must remember that it is "somebody's" duty to help them. We must remember that it is "somebody's" duty to help them. We must remember that it is "somebody's" duty to help them.

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poor wives and children! They stroll about attired like the lilies of the valley, with only two objects in view: first, the requirement of money without honest labor, and secondly, their daily food and clothing to be obtained in the same manner. As a natural consequence some one suffers by their idleness, either the wife, who is forced to go to work, or their two indolgent parents. A man who throws away his time in this manner is a common thief, as he is robbing his wife and children of their daily support. Should some of these chronic loafers be hauled in by the police, and carried before Justice John, it would be the means of breaking up the gang, and many a poor woman and child could have plenty to eat and wear, where they would only know privation and suffering if this means of forcing these idlers to work is not carried out.

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to bless you and me. "He who giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord." S. P. H.

The Passing of Polk Miller.
To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir—It is not easy to realize that the genial, jovial, sunny, fun-loving Polk Miller is dead. The death of this charming, popular entertainer leaves a gap in our social life that will be found difficult to fill. He will be missed in his loved Richmond, in his native State, and in our Southland, where, by his influence, he has won for himself a place in the hearts of all who knew him. He was a man of many talents, a man of many virtues, a man of many friends. He was a man who was loved by all who knew him. He was a man who was loved by all who knew him.

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